(b) if so, what is the plan to make this facility available to the students of schools located in rural areas, where internet facility is not available?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has displayed in its website answer sheets of a few subjects of students who scored full marks in class X and XII examinations of 2007.

(b) CBSE has separately advised its affiliated schools to have broadband connection to enable access to relevant information. Those which do not have the internet facility can avail of the services from the nearest centre having such facility.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Survey for Development of Food Processing Industries

3544. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted to assess the prospects for development of food processing industries in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government proposes to conduct such surveys for establishing industries based on food products, and also to encourage State Governments and agricultural organizations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Food Processing Industries has not conducted any specific survey to assess the prospects for Development of Food Processing Industries in the country as a whole. However, surveys/studies/evaluations have been conducted by the Govt. as a measure for development of Food Processing Industries in different States of the country like Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Maharashtra, Gujarat, West Bengal and Jharkhand.

Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) proposes a scheme which envisages providing financial assistance for setting up of thirty mega Food Parks in the country during 11th Five Year Plan period. The scheme which is project oriented, aims to provide a mechanism to bring together farmers, processors and retailers and link agricultural production to the market so as to ensure maximization of value addition, minimization of wastages and improving farmers' income. Mega Food Park envisages a well-defined agri/horticultural-processing Zone containing state of the art processing facilities with support infrastructure and well established supply chain. The primary objective of the scheme is to facilitate establishment of an integrated value chain, with processing at the core and supported by requisite forward and backward linkages. Under the scheme, financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid upto 50% of the project cost in general areas and upto 75% of the project cost in special category states subject to a maximum of Rs. 50.00 crore or the cost of approved facilities, whichever, is lower, has been envisaged for all implementing agencies.

Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI) has been providing financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid for Technology Upgradation/Establishment/Modernization of food processing industries upto 25% of the cost of plant and machinery and technical civil works subject to a maximum of Rs. 50 lakh in general areas and upto 33.33% in difficult areas subject to a maximum of 75 lakh to various implementing agencies for the overall development of Food Processing Sector.

Under the scheme of Promotional Activities, the Ministry has a provision to make need-based financial support available for survey/studies to be done by State Governments for development of food processing sector in their respective state.

Reduction in VAT on raw materials for biscuit manufacturing

3545. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the prices of raw materials required for biscuit manufacturing like edible oils, Maida and sugar have been gone up consequent upon presentation of the Budget 2008-09 and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that biscuit manufacturers have demanded a reduction in VAT, so that the prices of biscuits do not become a burden on the common people; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) Prices of commodities are generally governed by market forces of demand & supply. Prices of commodities across the board have witnessed an upward trend in recent months incuding raw materials required for biscuit manufacturing. This is mainly because of the rising demand on account of rising population, increase in purchasing powers & consequential changes in consumption pattern. Seasonal factors & hardening of international prices have also contributed to the same. The Government is concerned with the price rises and is trying its best to contain it.

(b) and (c) The Federation of Biscuits Manufacturers have demanded for a reduction of VAT on Biscuits from 12.5% to 4%. The matter has been taken up with the Empowered Committee on VAT.

Development of mega food parks

3546. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to develop mega food parks in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, *inter-alia* indicating the locations where such parks would be set up in Orissa and Jharkhand;

(c) whether it would be a centrally funded project or under PPP mode; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (d) Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI)